

Owen J. Roberts School District

901 Ridge Road, Pottstown, PA 19465-9314; voice 610-469-5187; fax 610-469-2782



Office of Transportation

TRANSPORTATION RELATED SERVICE INFORMATION



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General

State law does not require a school district to provide transportation to any student; but if a District does provide transportation, it must be provided to all students legally residing within District boundaries while attending State mandated non-profit school programs.

The Board of School Directors of the Owen J. Roberts School District has decided to provide transportation to-and-from school at District expense. This service shall be executed in accordance with guidelines set forth in the Public School Code and Vehicle Code of Pennsylvania.

Transportation will be provided to all students who are legal residents of the Owen J. Roberts School District and attend non-public schools located within the district boundary and outside the District's boundaries at a distance not exceeding ten (10) miles by the nearest public highway. To receive transportation services parents must complete an **ACT 372** form "requesting transportation services" and the school must submit written verification of the student's enrollment.

The Transportation Department of Owen J. Roberts School District exists to carry out the District's obligations to provide safe, economical, and timely transportation to all eligible residential school students who reside in one of the following seven (7) townships: East Coventry, South Coventry, North Coventry, East Vincent, West Vincent, Warwick, and East Nantmeal, which encompasses approximately 110 square miles.

Transportation is provided to approximately 5564 public school students and 610 non-public school students, utilizing approximately 3342 assigned bus stops, logging over 8020 miles daily totaling 1,443,713 miles per year. The district provides transportation to 7 public schools and approximately 69 private and parochial schools of which 67 are located outside the district's boundary.

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Students eligible for transportation may be required to walk up to 1-1/2 miles (elementary) or 2 miles (secondary) to their assigned bus stop; and, up to five hundred feet (500) on a roadway that has been designated "hazardous" by PennDOT, Title 67, Chap. 447, Para. 447.3(d).

In accordance with district policy bus stops are usually no more than four stops per mile but not less than 500 feet apart.

Kindergarten Transportation

Kindergarten students are provided with **one way** transportation only. **Noon transportation is not provided. *Kindergarten students must be accompanied at the bus stop by a parent/guardian or older sibling.**

It is suggested that parents/guardians or older siblings accompany younger students to and from the bus stop. It is important to note, if parents/guardians or older sibling normally meets or accompanies a 1st through 2nd grade student from the bus, and no one is present at the bus stop, the driver will return the student to the school unless prior notification is provided.

Bus Routes

The Owen J. Roberts School District has elected to use the services of an independent school bus contractor for its comprehensive network of student transportation services.

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The bus schedules shall be reviewed and approved by the Owen J. Roberts School Board. Administrative decisions may be appealed, in writing, to the Transportation Committee of the Board. Transportation Committee decisions may be appealed, in writing, to the Board. The decisions of the Board shall be "final."

Cooperation and responsibility of each parent and student is necessary in order for the District to provide safe transportation for its students. The supervision of students between residence and bus stops is the **parent's** responsibility.

Bus routes will not include "private", "unpaved -dirt" or "undedicated" streets, lanes and/or roads unless board approved.

Waiting for the School Bus

Arrive at the assigned bus stop five minutes prior to scheduled pick-up.

Students may only ride on the assigned bus from the assigned stop.

Wait in an orderly, quiet, manner and respect the property of others.

Wait at least ten feet from the road.

Do not push or shove.

Parents/guardians or older siblings should accompany younger children.

Parents/guardians must physically accompany kindergarten students.

Students should wait for the bus to come to a complete stop and for the door to open before approaching the bus.

Parents are **responsible** for their children while waiting for the school bus.

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While riding the bus:

Students must be seated facing front before the bus can move and remain seated while the bus is moving.

Students should not damage the bus or any equipment.

Students should never extend head, hands, arms, legs, or any part of the body out of the windows.

Students will not eat, chew gum, or drink on the bus.

Students may not possess illegal substances as in accordance to Policy #227 Drug & Alcohol and Policy #222 tobacco possession.

Students will not fight, hit, strike, kick, push, trip, slap or subject someone to physical contact.

Students will not engage in inappropriate language including foul or obscene words while waiting for or on the school bus.

Students will demonstrate respect while on the bus.

Students will not throw any objects in the bus or out of the bus windows.

Students will not display any type of behavior that would distract the driver.

Students are to remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.

All elementary age students have mandatory assigned seating.

If seat belts are installed, they must be fastened.

When exiting the bus students:

Students are only permitted to exit the bus at their assigned bus stop.

Remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.

Do not cross the road behind the bus.

Only cross the road after directed to do so by the bus driver.

Never approach or go behind a school bus.

Remember the danger zone - keep at least ten feet from the bus.

Never return to the bus to pick up anything.

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Items that are prohibited from the bus:

Animals, large musical instruments (except elementary size cellos), large school projects, any non-school related items ex: skate boards, roller blades, sleds, objects that could be harmful ex: weapons, glass containers, sharp metal objects, anything that could block the aisle or not be secured by the student.

Discipline:

Remember riding the school bus is a privilege that can be revoked if the rules are not followed. Bus incident reports are generated by the school bus driver to inform the school, parents, and children about infractions of the rules. Please review these rules with your child so he/she is aware of what is expected when riding the school bus.

The bus driver is required to report any discipline problem(s) to the appropriate school administrator.

State regulations mandate that no person may enter a school bus without prior authorization from the school district and bus driver. Refusal to disembark from the school bus after being ordered to do so is classified as a third -degree misdemeanor offense and subject to a penalty of up to \$2,500.00 or one year in prison.

Child-Care Transportation

For child care purposes, parents may request that their elementary age child or children be assigned, on a regular basis, a bus route or bus stop different from the route or stop assigned. The parent will complete and submit a Child Care Transportation Request Form.

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This form can be found on the Owen J. Roberts Web site and each public elementary school. Each request will be considered and evaluated on an individual basis. Requests for a student to ride on an alternate bus or be assigned an alternate bus stop will be approved only if the following conditions are met:

There is room on the alternative bus

The requested stop is on an established route that services your school

It must be daily Monday thru Friday

Transportation of students under shared custody arrangements

In instances of a court ordered shared custody arrangement in which both parents request a bus stop for a student in the District, the parents must provide a copy of the court order to the transportation department. Stop locations cannot cross attendance boundaries for elementary students or incur additional cost to the district.

In instances of a non-court ordered shared custody arrangement for a student, one permanent bus stop shall be designated as agreed upon by the parents.

Bus passes

OJRSD policy states that a student must ride only his/her assigned bus to and from school. Bus passes are only to be approved in an emergency situation; for example, sudden illness in the family or an accident that would result in no one home to receive young children, etc. If a Bus Pass is required a written request from the parent/guardian is required, and must include the reason, location and duration. This request is then given to the school for approval. If approved, the school will issue an official bus pass to the student. The student will present the pass to the bus driver.

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Written notes from parents, guardians or students and given to the driver are not acceptable.

Any student who needs a special bus stop established for medical reasons must provide proper written notification from a physician.

Video Cameras

The purpose for digital video recorders to be used on school buses is to aid in the safe transportation of student passengers.

All students who utilize Owen J. Roberts School District's transportation system are monitored by audio and visual surveillance cameras; therefore, by riding the bus you have automatically given permission and do not expect privacy.

A digital video recorder device with a camera and microphone are installed on all District contracted school buses. The digital recorder will be mounted in the vehicle to ensure it's accessibility to authorized district personnel only. Only authorized district personnel are permitted access to any of the surveillance equipment. A **warning notice** is posted in each bus notifying passengers that they are not to expect privacy, and that their actions on the bus are monitored by a video and audio surveillance system.

Radio Communication

The purpose of the Two-way Radio Communication system is to improve the efficiency of the District's transportation system and to ensure the safety of passengers. Radio communications are installed on all the District contracted school buses.

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Electronic Devices on School Bus/Vehicles - Policy 237

Students are restricted in the use of audio listening, imaging and video devices on school bus/vehicles. Students may possess these items but the imaging and audio capturing capabilities are prohibited. Audio listening is only permitted by the use of an ear listening device. Audio is not to be transmitted aloud.

Inclement Weather

Inclement weather may cause early dismissal of the District's schools or it may prevent the schools from opening. Decisions not to provide transportation or delayed transportation will be provided to your Non Public, Private School Administration. Please contact them or utilize the OJRSD website. www.ojrdsd.com



A decision not to open District schools constitutes a decision that all transportation of District public and non-public students has been suspended. Any non-public students whose schools are in session must provide their own transportation to and from their appropriate school.

During inclement weather all non-public/parochial/private schools will be bused in accordance to the Owen J. Roberts School District announced schedule regardless of whether the assigned school is open or delayed. The receiving schools must have someone at their facility to receive their students.